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H – 994

International Court of Justice

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Winkler
28 June 1946
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1000 - 1130 hours
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H0994-0002

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946

28 June 1946

COMMISSIONER:

I. D. McIlwraith

CORPS OF POLITICAL LEADERS

(The Commission convened at 1000 Hours)

BRUNO BIEDERMANN, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY MR. Mc Ilwraith: The witness is to be reminded that he is still under oath.

THE WITNESS: Yes sir.

CROSS EXAMINATION RESUMED

BY LT. COL. GRIFFITH JONES:

Q. I was asking you last night about the part that the Corps of Political Leaders played in the persecution of the Jews. You remember the demonstrations of November 1938?

A. Yes, I stated already yesterday that I was the Gauleiter in Thuringia, and with Mr. Sauckel in Munich. I do not know thatPolitical Leaders in the Gau of Thuringia participated in the demonstractions of November 1938.

Q. Do you know that the order that Heydrich issued to all districts and sub-districts of the SD ordered the chiefs of the State Police to get into telephonic contact with Political Leaders of the Gauleitung and Kreisleitung? Do you know that?

A. No, I do not know of such an order nor such a directive. At that time I was only in charge of the personnel affairs of the Gau office, and I wouldn't have received that order even if I would have been there at that time.

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Q. But surely you would have heard of that order, wouldn't you?

A. Only during my time as an internee.

Q. Let me ask you about it. In that sameorder the Chiefs of Police were instructed that at discussions they were to hold with the Political Leaders, they were to give the Political Leaders the order which they themselves received from Heydrich in order that the Political Leaders should adjust their own measures. What measures could the Political Leaders have had to take or had to adjust in regard to that action?

A. I stressed already I didn't see any orders from any Party authority from Heydrich or anybody else. I didn't get any knowledge of such directive.

Q. No, but you are a Political Leader with a considerable experience, and I'm asking you what type of measure was it that the Political Leaders had to adjust on that occasion?

A. I do not know that such xx orders were issued by high Partyauthorities to Gauleiters.

Q. Try to answer my question and you can take it from me that those orders were issued. What measures were the Political Leaders to take in regard to those demonstrations - the order for the demonstrations.

A. I was at that time in Munich, and I didn't even learn even subsequeutly whether such orders were given to the Political Leaders.

MR. MC ILWRAITH: The question is not whether they were given. The question is if they were given, what did they mean.

A. I don't know what kind of measures they would have taken. There existed a general order by the Gauleiter that the Political Leaders did not have any police functions, and therefore xx I would assume that they would not have participated in any campaign or action of such a thing.

Q. If you won't answer my question - I'll ask you another question. If

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the Political Leaders took no part at all in the measures against the Jews, why should the police have been instructed to get in touch with them?

A. It is not known to me why Heydrich or ~~xxx~~ any~~x~~ other Party office in Berlin should have issued such an order. As far as Iknow such ~~d~~emonstrations, as I have heard of - for instance, in regard to Frankfurt on the Main - did not ~~xxxx~~ take place that night in Thuringia.

Q. You used the expression yesterday in giving evidence that it was part of the duty of the Political Leaders to spread the gospel.

A. Yes.

Q. Do you mean by that spreading of racial gospel of the Nazi Party?

A. I make reference to the total philosphic knowledge of the Party.

Q. I'll ask you again. Do you mean by that - spreading the racial doctrines of the Nazi Party?

A. The race doctrines and the Anti-Semitic were, of course, a part of the Party doctrines.

Q. And I want to just ask you on that matter from there ~~of what at Thuringia~~ did you Gauleiters at Thuringia get your literature as to the methods of spreading the gospel in Thuringia?

A. Gau propaganda leiters and Gau trainings leiters received their professional directives directly from the headquarters in Berlin.

Q. Let me just read to you three lines of a speach which your Gauleiter Sauckel made in June 1944. He says"now the holders of the best virtue, the sailors, aviators, and soldiers of Great Britain, cannot stop the Jewish play which is making such rapid ravages on the body of their country." I quote that extract from document R.F. 1583, which is put in as a French exhibit 857, and is referred to on page 10713 in the transcript. Is that how you regarded the Jews in Thuringia, you Political Leaders, as playing?

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A. The Jewish problem wasn't xxx so urgent in Thuringia as it might have been in other parts of the country, and we thought the final solution was to settle them in the same territory sometime.

Q. I'm asking you if you in Thuringia thought the Jews "playing" like your Gauleiter did?

A. The Political Leaderxxx considered the Jews as a group within the German people who had assumed rights in xxxxx proportion of their number.

LT. COL. JONES: I have no further questions.

MR. MC ILWRAITH: Any further cross examination?

RUSSIAN PROSECUTION: No.

FRENCH PROSECUTION: No.

MR. MCILWRAITH: The witness may go.

xxxxxxx (Adjourned 1025 Hours)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of BRUNO BIEDERMANN, taken on 27 and 28 June 1946.

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Reporter (pp

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Reporter (pp

CERTIFIED TO: I. D. McIlwraith
Commissioner

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Commissioner

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they themselves received from Heydrich in order that the Political Leaders should adjust their own measures. What measures could the Political Leaders have had to take or had to adjust in regard to that action?

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Q No, but you are a Political Leader with a considerable experience, and I'm asking you what type of measure was it that the Political Leaders had to adjust on that occasion?

A I do not know that such orders were issued by High Party authorities to Gauleiters.

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Q You used the expression yesterday in giving evidence that it was part of the duty of the Political Leaders to spread the gospel.

A Yes.

Q Do you mean by that spreading of racial gospel of the Nazi Party?

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Q I'll ask you again. Do you mean by that - spreading the racial doctrines of the Nazi Party?

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Q And I want to ask you on that matter from where did you Gauleiters get your literature as to the methods of spreading the gospel in Thuringia?

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LT. COL. JONES: I have no further questions.

MR. MC ILWRAITH: Any further cross examination?

RUSSIAN PROSECUTION: No.

FRENCH PROSECUTION: No.

MR. MC ILWRAITH: The witness may go.

(Adjourned 1025 Hours)

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Bernice Winkler
Reporter

CERTIFIED TO:

I. D. McIlwraith
Commissioner